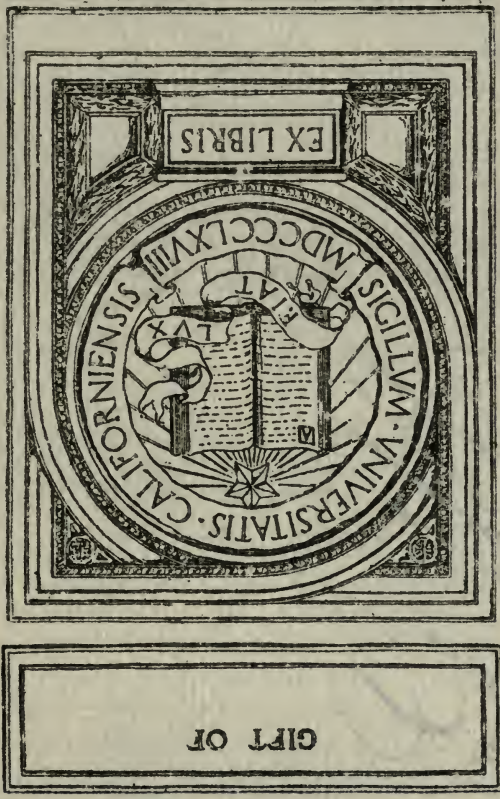

GIFT OF

THE POLICY OF NATIONAL INSTINCT

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A SPEECH DELIVERED BY

M. TAKE JONESCO

In the Roumanian Chamber of Deputies during the sitting of the 16th & 17th December, 1915.

London:
SIR JOSEPH CAUSTON & SONS, LIMITED.

1916.

THE POLICY OF NATIONAL INSTINCT.

GENTLEMEN,

The debates on the Address this year, both in the Senate and in the Chamber, are without precedent in the history of our Parliament, and very probably will never be paralleled.

THE MAGNITUDE OF EVENTS.

In all our long history there has never been a time of greater gravity, or one richer in possibilities, or one more overwhelming for us by its very grandeur, than the time through which the world is now passing; and naturally it affects us too, affects us more closely indeed than it affects others.

In circumstances like these the customary forms of ordinary life are too restricted to include the debates necessary to the occasion.

What, for instance, is this Parliamentary form habitually associated with the debates on the Address? Simply a contest between

parties; a race to obtain power, which is the sole means we have whereby we may put our ideas into execution; a competition before public opinion, with exaggeration, on the one side as on the other, of errors committed and of promises made as to activity in the future: a contest in which one set of men strives to vanquish another set of men within one and the same country.

Of what significance is all this, in presence of the tremendous events that are happening around us? How small, how paltry, how inadequate all the formulæ we are compelled to employ in consulting among ourselves upon the greatest decisions the Roumanian race has ever been called on to take, in events the consequences of which may be such that the man capable of realising them all has not yet been born!

In other countries the result of this exceptional gravity in the situation has been that normal life has burst out of its frame. Thus, in Belgium you have seen how Vandervelde, the Socialist leader, took his place in a Catholic Government, and how King Albert relied on his word when opposing the miserable invasion of the Fatherland. And so in France, where we behold side by side such men as Combes and the Catholic

Cochin ; where in the same Government sit the erstwhile Moderates with a downright Socialist like Guesde.

And we have seen the same thing even in fortunate England, defended against invasion by the sea—England, the very home of party politics, where to-day on the same Ministerial Benches are to be found Unionists, Liberals, and Labour members.

How, gentlemen, have these things become possible ? Why has the framework of ordinary convention thus been shattered, and other forms of procedure sought ? The reason is simply this, that the events of the moment are of such importance that there is no room for them within the limits of the old formulæ.

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT.

I am anxious that this statement of mine should not be construed into an invitation in the direction of the famous idea of government by everyone: of that National Government with which we have been so much reproached, as being the hidden object of our internal troubles, for troubles of any other sort there have never been; never was opposition calmer in its acts than this opposition of ours. I must,

then, make a digression on the subject of National Government.

Gentlemen, at a certain moment during the war the Prime Minister asked my advice—I do not say he would have been compelled to follow it—as to the utility of a National Government. This was immediately after the death of King Carol. The Prime Minister asked me if it would not be advisable that the new reign should start in the comparative tranquillity that might be brought about by the suppression of party conflict. I replied that at the moment I believed a National Government to be both unnecessary and impossible.

Unnecessary, because our grave pre-occupations over the external question had, in fact, put an end to party antagonism, and had consequently secured for the new Sovereign a period of relative calm for the opening of his reign.

Impossible, because the inclusion in the Government of those of us who had spoken with so much energy in favour of a warlike policy might be regarded as being in the nature of a provocation.

And if, gentlemen, I have on several occasions desired that we should join in the war, if I still desire it to-day, I have never desired that the momentous hour should depend on any govern-

mental combination, but rather on other political calculations superior to combinations of this kind. (*Applause.*)

But when the Prime Minister came to ask my opinion as to the utility of a National Government he had in his mind the remembrance of a decision at which we had both arrived.

In January, 1912, when we were considering the existing situation together—I must apologise for this revelation, which, however, has in it nothing embarrassing to either of us—at the moment when we saw the fall of the Carp Government to be inevitable, and when, naturally, we were greatly concerned as to what was about to happen, since we it was who had led the campaign against the Carp Government, we asked ourselves, among other things: If Roumania were to go to war what would be the most prudent way to make it ?

And we agreed that in any big and serious war that Roumania might have to conduct it would be preferable that she should conduct hostilities with all of us at the helm, and not simply those who should find themselves by chance in power at a certain moment.

It was for that reason that when, in 1913, the hour struck when we were obliged to go

to war, I did all that lay in my power—history will decide whether I did my utmost or not—to make National Government a reality. I desired a really National Government because I believed that we were not entering Bulgaria simply for military manœuvres, but to make war, for we did not cross the Danube simply to snatch a piece of territory; no, we crossed the Danube with the conviction that but for us Bulgaria would there and then have crushed the Greeks and the Serbians; and although we could accept a great and powerful Bulgaria as our neighbour, it was impossible to accept as neighbour a Bulgaria which had beaten Turks, Greeks, and Serbians one after the other, and must therefore have inevitably been hostile to us, and would have sought to win fresh laurels at our expense. (*Applause.*)

Here, gentlemen, I close the episode of the National Government.

I trust that for the future in our discussions this expression may not make its appearance anew, not at any rate as a term of reproach, to describe our manner of doing our duty in a country one of the foundations of whose renascence is its system of liberal institutions with national sovereignty.

THE DAWN OF A NEW WORLD.

Shall we inquire, gentlemen, what is the meaning of that which is happening around us ? Is this merely a war like all other wars ? Is it just one of those numberless historical incidents which at first sight seem to be important, but, as one realises later, were of no more than passing interest ? Or are we indeed face to face with one of those great upheavals which, occurring but rarely, make the end of one world and the beginning of another ?

Contemporaries, gentlemen, seldom realise the importance of the events amid which they live. In their wars they count the thousands of the slain, the millions of money lost ; but rarely do they take into account the far-off consequences of these events, obliged as they are by the necessities of life to go on living their everyday existence amidst the tragedy all around.

Those who lived in the time of Jesus Christ had no idea of how the history of humanity was to be affected by the coming of Christianity.

During the barbaric invasions nobody took into account what transformations they involved. Nobody knew that therefrom might result the death of civilisation for a thousand years. If

people had realised the meaning of these things they would have made better defence against them. At the time of the French Revolution people had no idea of the tremendous consequences it was to bring, of the far distance they would reach. To-day, gentlemen, I think we are confronted, not with an ordinary war which will simply involve a certain changing of frontiers, with things, after that, very much as they were before. We are faced by a catastrophe involving the whole of the human race; we have before our eyes the declining twilight of one world, preceding the dawn of another and a new world. (*Applause.*)

If it be otherwise there is no understanding that which we see happening. They don't feel this—the short-sighted people—short-sighted for no other reason than one which Balfour analysed so well on the day when he retired from the direction of the Unionist Party. On that occasion he said to his Committee:

"At sixty-four I am not an old man. Indeed, I can hardly have begun to get old, otherwise I should not realise that I have already reached that age. Nevertheless, I feel that it would be a sin if I were to continue to be leader of my party. Why, gentlemen? There comes to a man an age when he is no longer adaptable to new

ideas, to new currents. So true is this that a member of this House said to me one day that since reaching fifty he had no longer cared to read, for had he continued to do so it would have been useless." (*Laughter.*)

Of course, gentlemen, he was exaggerating, but the fact remains that after a certain age a man ceases to be adaptable, and that the more he becomes unadaptable to new ideas the more his authority increases; for that is the way of the world. The old politician carries more weight than the young.

Thus, Mr. Balfour remarked: "I am less adaptable, but I have more authority; therefore, I have become an obstacle to the way of the progress of the State, and it is time I left the control of the party to others, who do not consider things in the light of their ancient prejudices," as did M. Carp the other day in his fine speech. (*Applause.*) He tried to cut up this great tragedy into slices. He was at pains to unravel the thread of this wholesale conflict of humanity, and in it he discovered a case of France versus Germany, a case of Germany versus England, a case of Germany versus Russia, and I know not how many cases in addition! And to each he ascribed some small, ephemeral cause.

France is working miracles which have won our admiration, and she offers to the world the spectacle of a people held to be "flighty," transformed into a people the most determined that ever was —and all for the sake of recovering the lost provinces! Germany is making her efforts merely in order to create a colonial dominion. England can show to the rest of the world her four millions of volunteers, enrolled for that military service which was hitherto despised. England, unassailed in any quarter, is spending hundreds of millions and risking the Empire she has built up after centuries of sacrifice, simply to avoid the rivalry of Germany, which she could have done in so many other ways! No, gentlemen. So narrow a view of things cannot be true. When a large number of nations consent to make the sacrifices that are now being made with so much firmness, with such lightness of heart, and with so great a determination not to stop short of victory—a victory which shall crush their adversaries—then there must inevitably be working beneath all this something still more profound, something more than a question of colonies, something more than a matter of commercial rivalry, something more than that which is involved in fourteen thousand square metres of Alsace-Lorraine. And there is some-

thing else. Here we have the last fight made by the forces of reaction against the principle of national sovereignty, both in its internal and external relations. (*Prolonged applause.*)

A UNIVERSAL HEGEMONY.

And note, gentlemen, how grave is the problem with which humanity is faced to-day! You see Italy, instead of accepting a gratuitous increase of territory, throwing herself of her own free will into the horrors of war. And it is not alone the peoples of Europe who are throbbing with excitement to-day. Have you never asked yourselves what these new nations are doing in the great conflict—the young Republics founded by the Anglo-Saxons across the ocean? Why is it that we see Canada, Australia, New Zealand enrolling from 7 to 8 per cent. of their populations as volunteers for the front? Is it for love of the Mother country? Sentiment does not move humanity to such a degree as that. How is it the conscience of the United States of America has become uneasy? Out of love for England? Nothing of the sort, gentlemen. To attack Great Britain has always been recognised as a safe and popular note by orators in the United States: it is known as "twisting the British lion's tail." Why, then, is it dis-

turbed, this democracy of a hundred million souls, engaged in making the most glorious experiment imaginable: the creation of a civilisation without prejudices, with no class distinctions, with no monarchy, no militarism, no hindrance of any sort—a civilisation based solely on nationalist sovereignty carried to its extremest limits ?

M. A. C. Couza.—There you have a very dangerous theory.

M. Take Jonesco.—Why, gentlemen ? This entire movement can have but one explanation, namely, that we are confronted with a transformation of the human race, a transformation which expresses itself in the form of a general massacre. It is a struggle between two worlds, and we shall see which of the two will succeed in obtaining the mastery. Were it otherwise, this war would not be possible, and it would not be waged with the fury that distinguishes it from all others.

Gentlemen, the truth is that in this war, which was most certainly provoked by the Germans, we see the last attempt made by a single people to secure for itself a universal hegemony.

If the German soldier were to win to-day, the first result would be that the same military force,

which is the greatest in the world, would also be the greatest naval force, and there would be no more independence, no more liberty for anyone in the world, not even for the great American democracy. On the day when one and the same State had domination not only on land, but also on sea—the day when the Roman Empire should be reconstituted in conformity with the affirmation once made by the Emperor William, that the hour would come when all men would be happy to call themselves German, just as formerly each exclaimed joyously *Civis romanus sum*—then the free life of each one of us would be at an end.

Well, and what is the basis of this attempt that is being made ? Is it founded on some higher state of civilisation ? Is it justified by a superiority of such a nature that it should have the right to dominate the whole world, with the rest of us content to run behind the conqueror in his triumphal car ?

You will have noticed that M. Stere, who was compelled, of course, to deal with this subject —he did so very superficially, by the way—in his speech, could do no more than declare that it would be an injustice to deny the Germans credit for their contribution to the common treasure of human civilisation.

But who ever dreamed of denying them their due share of credit ?

But what, after all, is this contribution of Germany's ? Is it of finer quality than that produced by France, for instance, or than that of Italy, or than that furnished by the Anglo-Saxons ?

Is there a single hypothesis among all the hypotheses forming the basis of poetry and of science ; is there one of all the discoveries which have contributed to the progress—the material progress—of modern life ; is there one among all the ideas that have roused the world to enthusiasm ; is there one of all the creations of art which would be lost if we were to remove Germany's contribution ? No, gentlemen, the treasure possessed by the human race would remain intact, a little reduced to be sure, but in no wise diminished in quality. It would remain as it was before. (*Prolonged applause.*)

What is there in the assets of Germany to set against the extraordinary productions of our neo-Latin civilisation ? One thing alone there is that is characteristic in Germanic culture, and that is its political organisation, which to us is a riddle.

How is it possible to reconcile an ultra-modern economic organisation with a political organisa-

tion dating from the Middle Ages? How reconcile a teaching so generalised, a material well-being so highly developed, with a political system which enables one man to declare "My will is the highest law," or "I owe my power not to the assent of the German people but solely to the Divine mission with which I have been entrusted on earth"?

Such are the characteristics of German civilisation, of the far-famed *Kultur*. And, gentlemen, that springs, unhappily, from the manner in which the unity of Germany was formed.

If this German unity had sprung from the Liberal movement of 1848, a great new nation would have been added to the existing Liberal nations of Europe. But German unification is the product of Prussian "caporalism," with regard to which a very intelligent German holding a high position remarked to me five or six months ago: "You are right, all you say is true; there is nothing more antipathetic than Prussian 'caporalism;' but it is invincible, and we are forced to accept it just as we accept the Deluge, or the locust, just as we accept, in fact, all the ills that Fate may send us."

But, gentlemen, that is not the fact. While M. Diamandy was speaking of the Battle of the Marne someone replied that it was just an en-

gagement like any other. To which I retort: It was not a battle, it was an historic moment, it was the proof that even the brute force of "caporalism," in a State in which one man can proclaim that the highest law is his own will, may be vanquished by the armies of a democratic Republic wherein abuse of liberty was mistaken by fools for moral decline and loss of virtue. (*Prolonged applause.*)

HOW DID THE WAR ARISE?

And now, gentlemen, how did the war originate? What was the state of things before this war, before—shall I call it?—this human earthquake?

After the French Revolution two new dogmas came into the light: One was national sovereignty in the internal life of all States, the other was a like supremacy in international relations. One after another, all the races, so far as was compatible with the state of their civilisation, adopted this novel doctrine, and one after another those forces which stood in contradiction thereto everywhere declined; and, furthermore, national sovereignty transported into international relations had succeeded in obtaining recognition and there was proclaimed the principle of nationalities.

For the principle of nationalities is simply the right of each community of men, conscious of being bound by the memories of the past, by the interests of the present, by the aspirations of their own souls, to lead a life free and without restraint, be their numbers what they may, no matter how large or how small the extent of their territory, and despite all the abuses brought about by conquest, even though centuries should have passed since that conquest, as in the case of the Magyar conquest over the Roumanians beyond the mountains. (*Prolonged applause.*)

This principle of national sovereignty leads straight to the diminution of monarchical power in those States where the forms of mediævalism still linger. It leads to the suppression of Austria, which is a conglomeration of different peoples, having no other bond between them save the monarchy, and this a monarchy based on the ancient idea that it is not the nation that chooses its dynasty, but rather the dynasty that creates the nation. It leads straight to the definite abolition of Turkey, of which, when it shall have disappeared, its historian must record that it will have left to humanity no memory of its more than four-century-long domination, a domination which to-day—the day, as I hope, of its definite decline—crowns itself, like Nero

setting fire to Rome, with the massacre of a million Armenians, slaughtered without the allies of Turkey so much as raising a finger to prevent this, the greatest ignominy of our time. (*Applause.*)

But beyond this principle of national sovereignty there was something else that was making progress in Europe. Like it or not, there is no disguising it ! I mean the theory of the improvement of the material condition of the greatest number by the participation of the greatest number in the greatest part of the good things of the earth. This theory, gentlemen, was everywhere in the ascendant.

This was the atmosphere we all breathed, some with satisfaction, others in spite of themselves, but we all breathed it. In face of this great movement of the new world, which would have led, if not to the final disappearance of warfare, at least and certainly to a prolonged period of peace, to an improvement in the relations between the races, to what is called a Utopia, but a Utopia in which it was necessary to have full faith, because the bluest of blue skies is essential if we are to soar, we helpless humans. (*Applause.*)

In face of this movement there had nevertheless remained one State which represented its

exact opposite, a State which, founded on conquest, has never hesitated to proclaim the right of the strongest as the only right, which has embraced to the point of frenzy the worship of brute force, which regards as a mere sentimentalist, as one useless in political life, anyone who should dare to speak of justice, of law, of respect for one's signature, for all that constitutes the moral treasure of us neo-Latins. (*Prolonged applause.*)

And something else had happened in Europe. By great good fortune it chanced that on the throne of another land, which also is an autocratic land, where likewise the will of a single man settles everything, there was found another dreamer, a Nicholas, but a Nicholas who, instead of trying to play the part of Nicholas I.—who, as you know, was the gendarme of European reaction, and in 1848 went so far as to save the Habsburgs solely in obedience to the principle of *l'ordre prime tout*—actually proposed the limitation of armaments, which means a diminution of human suffering, or, in other words, a step in the direction of Justice. This man is Nicholas II.

And who was it that opposed this idea, gentlemen? Was it England, on whom day by day Austrians and Germans call down Divine

punishment because they say she provoked the war? Was it England, who had nothing to gain by the war, and everything to lose? Was it she who opposed the restriction of armaments? No, the opposition came from Germany! And thus humanity, instead of advancing towards disarmament, marched straight towards the madness of armaments unlimited, so that it became evident either that thrones must be overturned or that, in order to make an end of the old world once and for all, blood must flow like water, and the victims be numbered by millions. (*Applause.*)

HOW WILL THE WAR END?

And if such is the meaning of the war now raging, how can it be supposed that it can end with the customary peace, the sort of peace in which so many gold-laced, decorated plenipotentiaries will discuss a lot of nothings around a green cloth? Can one imagine that it will end like a duel with button-tipped foils, in which the swordsman hit exclaims "*Touché!*" and after shaking hands and putting the weapons in their case, the two adversaries go off and drink to each other's health?

No, gentlemen, to-day it is a war of nations rather than a war of armies; the conscience

of all the races is awakened ; this war must and will go on until one of the two sides shall have been crushed in such a manner that the victor shall be able to impose his rule upon the vanquished. No other peace will be acceptable to the nations.

If Germany is victorious her rule will be the rule of the mailed fist, the reign of a single people chosen by God ; if the others win—and win they will—the law they will impose will be the law of justice, in order that the whole world may enjoy the benefits of civilisation. (*Prolonged applause.*)

Such is the problem. But you will ask me : "What ! Is Germany to disappear ?" Who can imagine any such thing ? It is Austria that might and should vanish away. (*Applause.*)

Austria ought to have disappeared long ago. When she has vanished from sight a general sigh of relief will be heard ; everyone will be glad that at last she has paid the price of centuries of wickedness, for you may search the pages of her history through and through, and you will not find that she has done good to anyone of any sort, while many and many have been the sufferers from her treachery and her brutality. What would I not give to anyone

who should point out to me a single good action ever done by this Monarchy ? (*Applause.*)

And things being as they are, gentlemen, can you doubt on which side victory will rest ? I forget who it was said just now that it was childish to introduce the idea of morality into international politics.

How slight must be his acquaintance with the philosophy of history ! Individuals, like peoples, pay the price of the offences they commit against morality. In the one case punishment follows immediately, in the other case it is delayed ; but there would be no order in the universe, life would be without value, were it not that we have the conviction of the existence of a moral law above us. (*Applause.*)

NEUTRALITY.

And if, gentlemen, the problem is as I see it ; if the events through which we are passing are as I have attempted to describe them, how can one talk of neutrality ? Is there a single State throughout the world which will not be affected, which will not be transformed by the results of this war ? No, gentlemen, there is not one. But note this difference : There are some States which will suffer from the consequences of the

war without power to have their say, because they let their sword rust in its scabbard ; others there are which, while suffering no less severely from the effects of the conflict, will at least have a hearing : their utterance will be either that of the conqueror, who decides, or that of the vanquished, who, having done his duty, may rightly claim the respect of the victor. (*Applause.*)

But the man who supposes that we can remain untouched in the midst of this convulsion is simply hiding the truth from himself. Untouched ? No. But it might well happen that others decided on our fate without troubling to consult us. Therein lies the whole difference between the policy of neutrality and the policy of action. (*Applause.*)

I have heard talk of yet another course of political action, that which M. Stelian termed the policy of the carrion crow ; others have styled it the policy of the hyena. That is the policy which traffics with the one side and with the other, deceiving both, which lies in wait watching for its opportunity, unhampered by any sort of moral guidance, without inquiring in which direction its duty lies, knowing nought of the demands of honour, and, according to the turn of the scales this way or that, would

induce you—even you—to administer the *coup de grâce* to the expiring combatant, in order the more conveniently to rifle his pockets. (*Prolonged applause from the Opposition benches.*)

Political action of this kind is not only unworthy of a people which has displayed so many virtues throughout the centuries, but, believe me, it is a stupid policy, for the reason that it never succeeds. When the universe has been turned upside-down, as now, when so many sacrifices have been patiently endured, you may be sure the victors and the vanquished —knowing full well that others have been lurking in the darkness like hyenas—will in the end clasp hands like brave men, who respect one another, and the punishment will be for the cowards. (*Applause.*)

Gentlemen, I know of cases in which, in normal circumstances, this hyena-like policy may have been pursued, but I know of no case in history in which a nation has announced beforehand that it intended to play the hyena's part. That is the height of incapacity, combined with the height of immorality. (*Prolonged applause.*)

And as regards ourselves. Do you not realise the perils of such a policy for us Roumanians, a policy which, I feel convinced, is not the policy of the Government? It cannot be, for Rou-

mania is incapable of producing a Government which should adopt methods of so base a kind. (*Prolonged applause.*)

The material danger of such a policy would also be grave. It has been said that in times like these, when men are dying by millions, when all the virtues have been revived, when there is being written in letters of blood an epic without a parallel, the proper *rôle* of the statesmen is to be a thorough-going realist, to take no account of emotions or of sentiments, just as though life consisted of nothing but calculations, as though it was not, above all, controlled by the passions of men. (*Prolonged applause.*)

AT THE COST OF HUNGARY.

Let it be so, gentlemen! Even accepting the basis of calculation, the policy would be a mistaken one, since it is impossible for us to expand except at the cost, not of Austria properly so-called—that corpse full-ready for a successor!—but of Hungary. In spite of all our hostility towards the Hungarian people, we here are bound to recognise that they are most remarkably endowed with vital energy, patriotic force, and the power of recovery. (*An interruption.*)

The interruption is beside the point—I need not reply to it.

M. A. C. Couza.—Mine would have been to the point. (*Laughter.*)

M. Take Jonesco.—I did not hear it. (*Laughter.*)

Gentlemen, our aggrandisement could only be secured at the expense of Hungary, and the dismemberment of Hungary is no light matter. The Western nations cherish traditions about the Hungarians. The Hungarians have been credited with being the only nation in the East of Europe in the possession of liberal institutions. Even to-day the Hungarians retain a degree of support in the West, and M. Diamandy, whom I see opposite, was obliged, in the course of his journey, to combat the intrigues of the Hungarian Independence Party.

M. G. Diamandy.—That is perfectly true.

M. Take Jonesco.—The Hungarians, gentlemen, might very easily say:—"If the Roumanians were to adopt the hyena policy, it would be ourselves—the Hungarians—who could be of service to the conquerors, whoever they prove to be—as a sentinel against Russia if Germany won the day, as a sentinel against Germany if Russia emerged victorious." And,

possibly, they might rely on other circumstances in which history has involved us Roumanians, and use them to promote intrigues against us, and to create the belief that the world should not entertain too sanguine hopes of our being an effective sentinel against Germany, at all events during the next fifty years. I do not press the point; there is no use in doing so.

Thus, gentlemen, there are only two policies open to us. One is the policy of national instinct. The other is the policy supported in this House by M. Carp and M. Stern.

THE POLICY OF NATIONAL INSTINCT.

Gentlemen, I will examine the policy of national instinct independently of any other consideration. I will not stay to consider whether the Roumanians, whose title to nobility is that they are a Latin people, could find themselves opposed to the Latins engaged in the war to-day.

I will not ask myself whether the Roumanians, who owe to the majority of the states forming the Quadruple Alliance a deep debt of profound gratitude, and who owe to the Double Alliance nothing whatever but tribulation, could be capable of doing violence to their heartfelt sympathies and of furnishing a second example

of ingratitude. These are sentimental considerations. Neither will I occupy myself with the question whether it is possible for a State like ours to draw its sword by the side of those who have begun the war with the destruction of immortal Serbia, and by that ultimatum which, with the change of only a few words, might have been addressed to ourselves also. If it is possible that we should achieve unity and gain aggrandisement at the price of an infamy, I will not deal with this question—(*Opposition applause*)—I am dealing, gentlemen, with interests. I accept that. We are living in the days of interests. Let us take our stand on the ground of interests.

Well, as for myself, if I asked myself what is the best thing to do, I should answer: the first thing you must consult is the instinct of the nation.

We have heard about the streets and a misguided public opinion. "The streets" mean a few hundred individuals taking their walks; public opinion may be misled by a few months' clever campaigning. But the national instinct—from the peasant's hut to the rich man's palace—that is not the work of misguided public opinion; neither is it to be called "the streets," unless, at least, you believe that Roumania

is not a country where the nation is sovereign, but that she should enter the ranks of those countries where one man can say that his will is law supreme. (*Applause.*)

Instinct is not to be disputed. It speaks, and it speaks so clearly that on the day when we were obliged—and I will explain that too—to follow a different official policy, we had not the courage to make it public; it remained a secret known only to a few individuals. (*Applause.*) It was not submitted to the approval of the nation because it could not be.

This instinctive policy is not a whim, and it is not a blunder. No, gentlemen, it is based on a primordial fact, a fact as primordial as the right to live. Every people has a right to live its own life, its full life, with all that belongs to it, for in this way only can it also create a civilisation of its own, which enters into the harmonious circle of other civilisations.

This right every people feels to be the primordial and essential right, and that is why the Roumanian people has always understood, sometimes perhaps unconsciously, but at others with an absolutely conscious realisation, that for a thousand years back a problem has stood between it and the Hungarians; either the Hungarians are to occupy the heights of the

Carpathians, and from that position to dominate us, or we are to establish ourselves in the citadel of Transylvania and from that position to dominate the plains of Hungary. There is no third possibility. (*Prolonged applause.*)

For a thousand years the problem has faced us in this form, for a thousand years it has been present to our minds; but naturally those who have directed the State have viewed it in relation to the forces at our disposal.

We have not been a State of Don Quixotes, but neither have we been a State of men without perception and feeling. Every man of us—from the village schoolmaster with his map of Trajan's Dacia, with his roll of Roumanian lands lying under foreign domination, up to our statemen—yes, even on the day that they signed the treaty which bound us to Austria—every man of us had engraved on his heart in letters of fire the words "Ardéal," and "Union of the Nation!" (*Prolonged applause.*)

A CONVERSATION WITH BANFFY.

Do not imagine, gentlemen, that the Hungarians harbour the smallest doubt as to this. In January, 1896, I had a conversation with Baron Banffy, who was then Prime Minister

of Hungary. I myself had just fallen from power, and it was asserted that during my tenure of office—from 1891 till 1895—I had, unknown to the Cabinet (I was even blamed for it !), in some way supported the national movement beyond the Carpathians. I have always denied the charge, and I deny it again to-day. I will explain myself on the day when I see in this House the representatives of the Transmontane territory added to our number. (*Applause from the Minority.*) But, gentlemen, one of my colleagues in the Government said to me at that time with a polite cynicism—"Two provinces have given you a facer ! You flattered yourself that we should conquer the Bukovina and Transylvania. No conquest at all has been forthcoming ! "

Naturally, the report of these things travelled as far as Budapest, and Banffy wished to make the acquaintance of the fallen Minister who had had the audacity to assist the national movement. The first word of the Hungarian statesman was, "Never tell me, M. Jonesco, that you don't want to take Transylvania ! " I replied—"No, I can't tell you that, because, if I did, you would think me either a liar or a a cur. I do want to take Transylvania, but I know that I cannot."

When my turn came I said to him—"Neither will you tell me that you don't want to get to the Black Sea!"

And he answered—"I do want to, but I cannot."

And we consulted together to see if we could discover a *modus vivendi*. (*Applause.*)

THE ULTIMATE OBJECT.

I remarked to you, gentlemen, that, in regard to this subject, there has never been the smallest doubt in the mind of anybody. Now I will give you an example of what was said on the point some time ago in our House—naturally with modesty. In 1893 M. Stourdza had inaugurated a campaign for a Roumanian intervention in favour of the Roumanians of Ardéal. At the moment I do not discuss the political aspect, for that would drag us into internal politics, and it is far from my intention to weaken the country by a discussion of our past political quarrels. M. Stourdza had said then—"When the Roumanians who live outside the Kingdom have been suppressed and crushed, our hour, too, will sound, and very soon!"

And he added—"Nobody in this Kingdom thinks of the conquest of Transylvania, because

the forces necessary for such an enterprise are lacking to us, because such an enterprise, if it were possible, would bring about the destruction of Austria-Hungary, because such a destruction would be unfavourable to Roumanian interests, because it would involve a general disturbance in Europe."

M. Stourdza's words seemed to me an abdication, and in 1894 I made bold, speaking from my place as a Minister, to speak as follows :— "If it is an extraordinary thing to raise a question like that in the Roumanian Parliament, it is even more extraordinary to hear a statesman fix the frontiers of this country for all time, and declare to-day, in 1893, the limits to which the aspirations of the Roumanian race may attain in the centuries to come. (*Approval from the Minority; cries of "Bravo!"*)

Of a truth, gentlemen, our educational Leagues, our concern for the Roumanians on the other side of the Carpathians—all this movement implied, fundamentally, a mental reservation. It all resolved itself into a provisional attitude, destined to last just so long as the European situation which prevented us from realising our national ideal. (*Applause.*)

For our ultimate object, which was cherished in the minds of us all and made all our hearts

beat, has always been the same—a union of the nation not merely intellectual but also political—our unification within the boundaries traced for us by Trajan—I mean, astride the Carpathians, and pushing out to right and left with all our power! (*Prolonged applause.*)

HAS THE HOUR SOUNDED?

And now—has the hour come?

Gentlemen, I should not be telling the truth if I were to say to you that I did not imagine that the hour in which the age-long dream of Roumanian people would find fulfilment would come in my lifetime.

There is among us a Member—I see him before me—who, when I returned from Athens in 1913—the crowning point of my public life—came to advise me to give up politics. He said to me: "You have proved your powers. What is there for you to do in the future?" I answered:—"If I were certain that, during the years of life which remain for me, the great problem would not come to maturity, I would retire. But although I cannot believe in its advent, I am not certain; and at the day of its coming nobody ought to be absent—no one of those who has had the good fortune—whether deserved or not—to be able, by their example

and their voice, to sway a section of their fellow citizens. No one can be allowed to absolve himself from discharging his duty."

The hour has come sooner than we expected. Let us rejoice at its coming! Let us rise to the greatness of the occasion! (*Applause.*)

THE RUSSIAN DANGER.

Although these opinions are held by nearly everybody, I have just heard, in the course of the last two days, the *exposé* of another policy. We have just been told that the principal mission of the Roumanian State is not to concern itself with the unification of the race nor to develop strength enough to resist the dangers of the future, but that our mission is to prevent, at all costs, Russia from obtaining access to the open sea.

First of all, gentlemen, allow me to note an extraordinary contradiction involved in this way of speaking, according to which Russia figures, at one and the same time, both as so powerful that none of her neighbours could continue to live in freedom, and as so weak that, even when allied with England, France, Italy, and Japan, she could be not merely defeated, but driven right back to Moscow. For that is

what the prophecy comes to—beaten back behind Bessarabia, behind the Ukraine with its ten millions of inhabitants! Gentlemen, Russia is neither so powerful as these gentlemen picture her to themselves, nor so weak as the same men pretend. Evidently Russia constitutes a danger for us. For a small State the neighbourhood of a great one is always a danger. Would it not have been much better for Belgium not to be a neighbour of Germany's? Who will deny that? Nobody; not even the preachers of cowardice, the men who maintain that Belgium would have been better advised to bow before the invasion—and then send in her bill to be paid at the Imperial Bank! (*Prolonged applause.*)

On the day of the opening of Parliament, in 1912, in the course of a discussion with M. Daneff, I said to him: "You are in a position to cede to us a little of your territory, so as to insure to us our access to the sea. For you enjoy one immense advantage over us, you are not neighbours with any great Power. For my part I would willingly sacrifice a fragment of my body—that is to say, of Roumania as she is to-day—if by that means I could, for the future, have neither Austria nor Russia for neighbours." What then? Can people choose their neighbours? Could M. Stere, even if he

were made Dictator of Roumania, manœuvre Russia out of our neighbourhood ?

Be well advised—the question which confronts us is a very far-reaching one. We ourselves, to secure our access to the sea, have asked a fragment of Bulgarian soil—and people have not been wanting to tell us that we have not asked enough. The question lies open for the next Congress—it lies open as a consequence of the conduct of Bulgaria. (*Prolonged applause.*)

And is it eternally necessary to prevent the Russian people from having access to the sea ? And is the essential *rôle* which we have to play to be that of a policeman, of a sentinel, preventing Russia from securing access to the open sea ? But what does that mean ? Since Russia will always struggle to reach the sea, our part would be to be eternally on guard to prevent Russia from realising her age-long dream, and meanwhile—long live Tisza and Apponyi's Ordinance ! for we should not be able to trouble ourselves about matters like that ! (*Prolonged applause.*)

People have come here to tell us what a Russian general said before 1812—since the Treaty of Bucharest, which was quoted so cleverly, was not the treaty of 1913 but that of 1812—with a view to informing us that Russia

then desired to annex Moldavia and Wallachia. Well, did we not know that? Did we not know that Russia entertained the desire of annexing us? And Austria-Hungary—has not she taken Olténia from us? Has not she torn the Bukovina from us? Has she not wanted to annex us right out? And if at a certain moment she did not succeed in annexing us, was it not because they came to an agreement over the partition of Poland? It is Poland who paid for us then, Poland who saved us from annexation to Austria.

We have also had quoted to us a letter from a landed proprietor of Bessarabia who, in 1820, wrote to another landed proprietor, that his estate in Moldavia would soon pass into the possession of Russia. Well, what of it?

It was added that M. Fonton, formerly Russian Minister at Bucharest, said one day:—"What a nuisance it is that the Roumanians are established between the Slavs of the North and the Slavs of the South!" But do not I say: "What a nuisance it is that the Russians have settled themselves side by side with the Roumanians"? (*Laughter and applause.*)

But Casso has said:—"We Russians won in 1878 no more than the frontier of 1812." I am not familiar with the passage from which

the quotation is taken. I cannot imagine that Casso said that Russia would have liked to take a bit of Roumania too. To say that would have been a blunder on his part. In all probability Casso was discussing the results of the war of 1878, and most likely what he said was: "Everybody gained something in 1878. Russia gained only two things, Southern Bessarabia, the three departments—that is to say the frontier of 1812—and the hostility of a Bulgaria which she herself had created."

But we are told that the Russians have invaded Roumania nine times.

Gentlemen, in my opinion we ought to examine the question with complete freedom. Our relations with the Russians are more complex than is conceived by those whose judgment is naturally biassed, both by the fact that they are natives of Bessarabia, and by the fact that they have passed eight years of their youth in Siberia. I happen to occupy a more detached position. If I had been in Siberia, it is possible —who knows ?—that the memory of my sufferings would have so blinded me that I could not see even the interests of my country. It is possible. But—well, you see—I have not been in Siberia ! (*Applause.*)

OUR RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA.

I remarked just now, gentlemen, that our relations with the Russians are very complex.

When the Western Powers had abandoned the crusade against the Turks, the Russians took this crusade upon themselves. No doubt they have found their profit in it—that is very certain—but others have found their profit in it also. It is from these wars that the independence of Greece has resulted; it is from these wars that the independence of Serbia has resulted, though the Greeks and Serbians have, naturally, made sacrifices of their own besides. The independence of Bulgaria was equally the result of these wars—but without any sacrifice on the part of the Bulgarians. That is probably another reason why their gratitude is the more remarkable!

These wars have been of service to us, too, in rescuing us from the cruelties of the Turks, from those cruelties of which we of our generation have no recollection, but which the old men whom we knew in our childhood could well recall, and spoke of in tones of horror. It is true that in our case we have paid the price. With the country lying between the Pruth and the Dneister we have paid for the emancipation

of all the Balkan peoples! Of a truth we have great occasion for sorrow in the fact that we alone have paid the price, while the others have found nothing but profit in this crusade of the Russians for the emancipation of the Balkan peoples! Bessarabia is dear to us! How could a piece torn from our body be otherwise than dear to us? And here I am not thinking only of the three departments, those which are least Roumanian, but of Bessarabia as a whole. When I say Bessarabia, I mean all the country included between the Pruth and the Dniester, that is, the half of Moldavia that we have lost.

Only the Russians took away the half of Moldavia by fighting, whilst Austria wrested the Bukovina from us without stirring a finger. (*Prolonged applause.*)

And when one compares the two acts of injustice, it is impossible to prefer those who have done nothing but swallow. It is like the case of the partition of Poland; Frederick proposed it, Russia accepted it, and Maria Theresa alone declared that she only accepted it with tears, as if it might be some consolation to Poland to know that Maria Theresa had soaked two or three handkerchiefs on the occasion of this outrage.

M. G. DIAMANDY.—Will you allow me to make an observation ? It was said of Maria Theresa that she was always weeping, but that at the same time she went on demanding more and more. (*Applause.*)

M. A. C. COUZA.—The observation is thoroughly to the point.

M. TAKE JONESCO.—Do you know when there began to be a disturbance in the friendly relations between ourselves and Russia ? Do you know when a feeling of great hostility to Russia grew up in our country ? At the beginning of the nineteenth century, and for a very legitimate reason. Our renaissance was based upon Liberal ideas which we had got from our sister France, at the time when Russia was the policeman of European reaction. The result of this was a permanent conflict, during the greater part of the nineteenth century, between the Russian Government, which everywhere upheld the reaction—indeed, upheld it to the extent of a re-establishing of the Hapsburgs in 1848—and the tendency of our national renaissance. These times are over; our renaissance is an accomplished fact; others have transformed themselves into the police of reaction; we are therefore in a position to examine the relations between Russia and our-

selves with the same liberty, the same absence of prejudice, with which we examine our relations with other Powers. But what of the *phobias*, gentlemen ?

RUSSO-PHOBIA.

It is another matter with the *phobias*. Would you like me to show you how far Russo-phobia can go ? What M. Stere said is a mere nothing ; I will call your attention to what M. Carp said in 1878. A crime was committed in 1878 by Russia, and a mistake, I believe, by ourselves. I will not concern myself now with our mistake, for I do not want to turn the discussion at present upon our political past, a discussion which would inevitably involve estimates of parties and of personalities. But do you know how far M. Carp went when we took over the Dobrudja ? He said : " Since Bessarabia has been taken from us "—which, by the way, M. Carp did not suggest that we should defend by force of arms—" let us refuse the Dobrudja, so that we may never forget our hatred of Russia ! "

Suppose, gentlemen, that the Roumanian Parliament had followed his advice, that Roumania had *not* accepted the Dobrudja, that the Bulgarian Government had established itself at the mouth of the Danube, and that we had

been cut off from all access to the sea—what would the position of Roumania have been in such a case ? (*Applause.*)

Since a large number of the younger men amongst us are not familiar with the words of M. Carp, allow me to read them to you :—

" Let us admit that politics are a question of interest, and not of ethics ; let us admit that the moment we have a chance of getting something, we ought not to consider the sacrifices which we make ; but let us see in that case what the interests are which we serve by taking possession of the Dobrudja ?

" We have been told that we reach the sea. Well, accepting this idea, I should like to know if Kiustendje would give us a commercial outlet. Do you believe that the Port of Kiustendje could compete with a port situated on the estuary of a great river ? Show me a single port which has been prosperous at a distance of thirty kilometers from the mouth of a river. Marseilles, Nantes, Le Havre, Bordeaux, all the great doors of entry into Europe, are at the mouths of rivers and not lying some way aside. . . .

" For my part I cannot acquiesce in the decision of the Congress of Berlin regarding the Dobrudja ; for the taking of the Dobrudja

means, to my mind, nothing else than the obligation of being perpetually in alliance with Russia. . . .

" From all these considerations, I am against accepting the Dobrudja. . . .

" With regard to Bessarabia, I am for accepting what we are unable to prevent."

Well, gentlemen, a people confronted with a great injustice acts either like the Belgium of King Albert and is crushed in defending itself, or it resorts to diplomacy.

But a diplomacy of this kind—to cede Bessarabia and not accept the Dobrudja—is, allow me to say so, a diplomacy of the lowest order, which could certainly not incline me to-day to follow in his present diplomacy him who gave such counsel. (*Applause from the Minority.*)

AUSTRIA ALSO WISHED TO ANNEX US.

But, gentlemen, Russia wished to annex us.

That is true. Let me inform you, on the authority of someone more important than M. Stere, that Austria also wishes to annex us, and why Austria has ground for annexing us. I will read you some words of Bismarck's. They are of more recent date than those of the

Russian landowner of 1820 who wrote to another landowner in Bessarabia regarding the partition of some land situated somewhere or other. This is what Bismarck says in his Memoirs. It was the moment when Bismarck had been obliged to choose between the traditional age-long alliance with Russia and the alliance with Austria. Bismarck explains at great length why he prefers the alliance with Austria.

Then Bismarck goes on to ask: "Does this mean that we are going to back up Austria in her Balkan policy?"

"Austria would expect too much of us if she asked that," he says, and he adds: "It is easy to understand that the inhabitants of the basin of the Danube may have needs and desires which extend beyond the present frontier of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The constitution of the German Empire points out the true way for Austria to follow in order to do justice to the interests, political and material, which she has in the country between the Eastern frontier of the Rouman nation and Cattaro."

You see, gentlemen, according to Bismarck, it is quite a legitimate aspiration on the part of the inhabitants of the Danube basin, that is to say, of Austria, to extend their frontiers up to the Eastern boundary of the Roumanian

people, that is, to the Dniester; and Austria has simply to look at the way in which the German Empire has been constituted to discover the way of compassing these desires and reaching this end!

What consequences do you draw from all this?

That we should never have associated ourselves in our policy with Austria? Austria had an eye to nothing but its own interests when it wished to annex us; Russia, in the same way, was pursuing its own interests, when it wished similarly to annex us; but I too serve my interests when I am able to draw from these world-events the capacity of being stronger in the future, so as to withstand all the desires of the others. (*Applause from the Opposition.*)

PAN-SLAVISM.

Gentlemen, we have also heard a good deal about Pan-Slavism!

I thought that, having before your eyes what has happened in Bulgaria, you were cured of the fear of Pan-Slavism.

Are you not convinced, then, that on the day when Serbia sees her national unity realized, there will be witnessed in Serbia too—not,

indeed, such an instance of unexampled ingratitude as has been given by Bulgaria—but the thirst for independence in the direction of her national policy ?

There is not a people on earth which, once its aspirations are satisfied, has not such a love of independence that even in the face of its benefactors it does not hold high and straight the banner of its liberty. (*Applause.*)

M. N. Jorga.—I may mention that I have been in Serbia since the war. The Russian Minister who advised the Serbs to fight was still all-powerful there. I asked them what was their feeling with regard to the Russians, and the unanimous reply was :—" We are all of one mind ; we are Serbs, and we only march alongside of those who further our interests." Amongst the Serbs the idea of Pan-Slavism has not entered the head of anybody.

M. Take Jonesco.—Gentlemen, we have also had recalled to us in this place the words of Michel Kogalniceano. Well, gentlemen, in this Chamber, in which I have sat for the last 31 years, there are still alive many deputies as old as myself, who know that the late Kogalniceano was one of the few politicians who never approved of the alliance with the Central Powers. If he did not say so to others, he said

so to me many times, and he said something else to me :—" Do you imagine that you will be able to carry out this Treaty ? You are mistaken. When the hour for carrying it out sounds, you will not be able to do so."

Suffer Kogalniceano to sleep in peace. The man who made the peasants proprietors, the man who secularized the convents, the man who made the great speech on behalf of the peasant proprietors, the finest speech that a Roumanian Minister has ever delivered, has the right to sleep in peace, and not to be dragged to-day into a discussion in which we are asked to renounce our national ideal. (*Prolonged applause.*)

But they tell us, gentlemen, " The Russians will take the Straits."

What ! Does it depend upon us who will take the Straits ? Does the problem resolve itself into—the Turks or the Russians ?

It may be that the Russians will take the Straits. It may be that the Allies will take the Straits. It may be that the Germans will take the Straits. One thing, however, is certain—that the Turks will not stay on the Straits. One must be a child to imagine that the people who are going to get profit out of this turmoil of the

civilized nations are the Turks. Some Young Turks, who have brought their country to untimely ruin, may have believed that. But for a politician who has two grains of good sense in his head it is unthinkable. (*Applause.*)

AN ASSERTION.

But there is also something else which we are told: the Russians ask of us Galatz and Lower Moldavia. I admit to having heard windy talk of this kind on more than one occasion. I had read it in the interview with a former Deputy of Galatz, who is now a Germanophile. He is within his rights, all those who have conceived this idea for themselves are within their rights; those into whom it has been instilled by others are not within their rights! I wondered what the origin of this absurdity was. For I, too, know what is happening, and what has happened, and I know that there has never been a question of anything of the sort. We have heard M. Carp say: "King Carol told me so." Gentlemen, I do not know whether it is good to bring King Carol into our debates. King Carol told me also many things, but I shall not carry into this place one single word of King Carol's. I shall say that I know certain things, but I shall not say

that King Carol is my authority. I know that I am bound not to doubt the word of a speaker, who says that he has heard King Carol make such a statement. If M. Carp had not added something else, I should have said: "King Carol was mistaken." But M. Carp added: "King Carol told the same thing to others as well." Then, gentlemen, I succeeded in finding another person, who does not meddle with politics, whose word cannot be doubted, whose name you will not force me to cause to appear in the pages of the *Official Gazette*, and to whom King Carol talked of this very matter. But do you know what King Carol said? That in Germany it was reported that the Russians intended to take Lower Moldavia and Galatz, and that even some German newspapers were saying so. Gentlemen, I could point you out a Swiss paper which says that in Germany it is said that Roumania ought to give the Dobrudja to Bulgaria. Between the reports circulating in Germany and what King Carol knew personally as a fact—the old Sovereign who had a profound acquaintance with everything going on—there is a wide difference, and I cannot approve of the manufacture of history by carrying into this place such an assertion as coming from King Carol. (*Applause from the Opposition.*)

M. P. P. Carp.—M. Jonesco, I can prove my assertion.

M. Take Jonesco.—Prove it. M. Carp is always full of assertions. Allow me to tell you another of his assertions. At the Crown Council M. Carp said to us: "I assure you that Italy will enter into the war as an ally of Austria, and that at this moment she is in process of bargaining." We told him that we knew precisely the contrary to be true, that is, that Italy was not negotiating with Austria. And the proof was Italy's entrance into the war as the ally of France.

M. P. P. Carp.—You are mistaken, I told you that Italy was negotiating, and that she would join the side on which she thought she could get the most. (*Laughter.*)

M. Take Jonesco.—It has also been said that the Russians purpose to give the Iron Gates to the Serbs. For my part, I know nothing of what the Government has done, and I will say nothing of my conversations with the Government. I have not the right to know, and I do not know. I know only this, that in the discussion I had—not with the Government—as to the future map of Europe, there was a disagreement as to the western part of Banat, but so far as the province of Caras-Severin goes, the province to which the Iron Gates belong,

and where the Roumanians are thicker than in any other part of Hungary, there has never been any discussion. Where, then, did you get the Iron Gates from ?

M. N. Jorga.—The Serbs have not asked for them either.

M. Take Jonesco.—How could they ask for them ? I have the map of their claims. The County of Caras-Severin does not appear in it. More than that, when the Serbian *Voivodina* was created, which only lasted a few years—it was one of those rewards which Austria gives to those who serve her, but which she withdraws the moment after having given them—Serbia asked that the Roumanian part of Caras-Severin might be separated from their *Voivodina*. This document exists; it is historical. M. Jorga probably knows it; I, too, have read it. What remains ?

M. Stere has made another discovery: we ought to march against the Russians because, the Bulgarians having behaved badly to the Russians, Russia will annex Bulgaria. (*Laughter.*) Supposing the Bulgarians had behaved well, should we have had to march in the opposite direction ? (*Laughter.*)

How can you speak of the conscience of a nation whose course in a great cataclysm

depends on the conduct of the Cobourg Ferdinand of Bulgaria and not on that of Bulgaria? Because poor Bulgaria knows nothing of what is being done in her name. (*Prolonged applause.*)

THE FUTURE.

I am asked, however, gentlemen: "And what of the future? What will Russia do in the future?"

Well, gentlemen, it is very difficult to deal with the question of the distant future. That is beyond my powers. If anyone could raise again the greatest man who ever lived upon the earth, Napoleon, and show him the political situation to-day, Napoleon would be completely nonplussed; so impossible is it to look far ahead.

If we raised Richelieu, he would say that in present-day Europe he felt himself in a madhouse. He would compare the world to-day with the world he knew, and would ask: "But where is Sweden? Where is Poland? What does the Great Elector say? What does the King of Spain say?" It would never enter his head to ask—"What does Japan say? What do the United States say? What does Italy say? What Russia?" The future,

gentlemen, will take thought for the problems of the future, and if it should come to pass that, after Germany has made the attempt to establish a universal Empire and the attempt has been crushed, Russia in its turn makes the same attempt, a new coalition will take shape against her; and from this same tribune speeches will be made in favour of our entering into the new coalition, since, gentlemen, no one engages himself for eternity. Each several hour has its own solution; all that is asked is that you should be loyal and sincere when you conclude an alliance. When it comes to making forecasts to-day for centuries ahead—settling the business of those centuries, M. Stere, by an impassioned speech—allow me to say that I cannot take that quite seriously.

Now, gentlemen, let us pass to the execution of that policy. How is that policy to be carried out? And, first, there is the fact that that policy presupposes—do you know what? The certainty that the Quadruple Entente will be defeated—not such a defeat as Germany requires to-day in order to obtain a peace on the *status-quo* basis, no, but such a defeat that not only Poland may be amputated from the Russian Empire (Poland in any case will gain greater freedom as the result of this war; whatever be

its issue, the wrongs committed against her will be avenged) that not only Bessarabia may be detached from Russian territory and made over to us—time was when we were tempted with the bait of Odessa—

M. N. Jorga.—And Kieff!

M. Take Jonesco.—No, not Kieff. Kieff was a military objective; Odessa was a case of annexation. It was then that I discovered in an article in the *Viatza Romaneasca* that Odessa might at a pinch also count as a Roumanian town, because there are 50,000 Roumanians in it and the remainder of the population are Jews, and, consequently, we might make it a Roumanian town. (*Laughter.*) It was a discovery which somewhat upset my geographical notions, and since I could not contend with the *Viatza Romaneasca,* I was obliged to bow to the new doctrine.

But there is more. In order that we might be able to keep Bessarabia, after it had been taken by war from Russia, something else was necessary; it was necessary to create the Ukraine as well. The Ukraine—upon my word, I don't know what the Ukraine is.

M. N. Jorga.—It does not even exist.

M. Take Jonesco.—What Poland is I know. Science tells me, history tells me, literature

tells me, the great men whom it has produced tell me. If we had Chopin alone we should all know what Poland is. What is Poland? That stubborn heroism, that struggle of a hundred years and more, against the cruellest fate, against partition amongst three Powers, which does not leave one corner of land for independent life—these things tell what Poland is.

The heart of every man who can appreciate the moral idea in humanity will be able to say what Poland is. (*Prolonged applause.*)

But the Ukraine?

M. A. C. Couza.—The Ukraine is the country of M. Stere. (*Laughter.*)

M. Take Jonesco.—I was at school when I became acquainted for the first time with the Ukraine. I then came across a pamphlet, printed anonymously in Paris at the Imprimerie Nationale in 1861, on the Ukraine. At that time it was called "Little Russia." What was it, gentlemen? Napoleon III., that great dreamer, who found himself Emperor of France, he, too, dreamed of great transformations. Some refugee or other had talked to him about the possibility of a Ukraine. I never heard it spoken of again until the time of this war.

From this war issued the Ukraine, and even a Roumanian has arisen who has been transformed into a Ukrainian, only, it is true, when he had no more money and was ruined. Since then I even see Ukrainian reviews.

Gentlemen, whether the Ukraine exists or not I do not know. But I do know that the course of the War is not of such a nature as to make one believe in the realisation of the programme of the Councillor of State Riedl, who explained it to me in 1912, when he asked that Roumania should enter into a "Zollverein" with Austria, in return for the support which she would give us in the case of an attack from Russia, and when he told me that Russia's access both to the Baltic and to the Black Sea would be cut off, and that she would be thrown back to the Caucasus. But, gentlemen, even if this should happen, the idea would be absurd. Look at the map. There would be no frontiers for this new Russian State, and either Muscovy would reconquer the Ukraine in order to get to the sea, or the Ukraine would conquer Muscovy, and we Roumanians would still be the neighbours of a great Power, in spite of the sentry duty to which we are condemned by M. Stere.

And, gentlemen, as we are speaking of sufferings, M. Stere referred to Russian Poland, but is the Poland of Posen in any better condition ? What about the laws by which a Polish citizen of the Prussian State has not the right to buy land ? What about the laws by which land may be bought by force from the Poles, and the Poles replaced by colonists ? What about Bülow's words : " I was obliged to do this because the Poles multiply like rabbits, while my Prussians only multiply like hares " ? Ah, gentlemen, does all this count for nothing ?

These things are more painful when they emanate from a cultivated people than when their author is a Russian lash, which falls on Russians and Poles alike—since such is still the internal condition of Russia.

It will no doubt improve as time goes on. It is not necessary to be a great philosopher to realise that it is indeed a sign of the times that the Eastern autocracy is allied with the three Western democracies, and that in this war against the other reaction lies the great hope in the triumph of progress, even in the great empire of the Tsar. (*Applause from the Minority.*)

THE PRICE OF AN ANTI-RUSSIAN POLICY.

And now, gentlemen, so be it—let us fulfil our new mission as the eternal guardian standing between Russia and the sea, that sea to which Bismarck, whom I will again quote, was convinced that she had the right of access. This is what Bismarck said in his Memoirs :—

" If I were an Austrian Minister, I should not prevent the Russians from getting to Constantinople, but I should not try to come to a good understanding with them until after their offensive movement had been carried out."

You will also see in the Memoirs of Crispi, who had long conversations with Bismarck, that Bismarck said to him : " Let us allow the Russians to get to the Straits, otherwise we shall see them in Galicia, and in the Carpathians." And Crispi said to him : " But do you not fear for the independence of the small states of Eastern Europe ? "

Bismarck answered : " No. When once the Russians get to the Straits by one means or another, they are less dangerous to the small states, who will then no longer bar their way, than to-day when they form an obstacle which prevents Russia from getting to the open sea."

But, gentlemen, with what are we going to pay for this policy ? It is not a question of a policy of a few years, but of a permanent policy. Russia will always want to get to the sea, and we must always try to prevent her. What is the price ? It is this. The first price is the definite destruction of the Roumanian race across the Carpathians. Already inhuman military dispositions have worked in this direction. M. Carp is wrong to console himself with the thought that the Roumanians died as heroes, for if the Roumanians were systematically sent in a larger proportion than the others to die as heroes, it was in order that the country which they had inhabited might remain deserted, so as to make room for colonists, for a pack of the scum of the earth. (*"Bravo!" Prolonged applause from the Opposition.*)

But, gentlemen, we shall not only lose the bodies of the Roumanians across the mountains, we shall also lose their souls. These people will say to themselves : " If, even in these circumstances, which no one could foresee, in this coalition of the most powerful States in the world, bent on the abolition of Austria, if even on this occasion our brothers have risked nothing for us, surely the hour will never come when they will risk or dare anything ? "

And the last flame which burns in their hearts for their Roumanian fatherland would be extinguished in tears mixed with curses and contempt. (" *Bravo !* " *Prolonged applause from the Opposition.*)

I could understand, gentlemen, I could understand inaction if the hardness of fate had never brought an opportunity permitting us to cross the Carpathians with our banners unfurled; but, in face of this last unique opportunity—for how could such another ever arise—how can we remain immovable ? We should be lost for ever in the eyes of our brothers, and we should deserve our fate. One has not the right to ask anyone to sacrifice themselves for cowards. It is impossible. (*Prolonged applause from the Opposition.*)

Well, gentlemen, let us admit that we have sacrificed the Roumanians across the mountains, in order to mount guard against Russia.

THE MAGYAR VASSALDOM.

For us, the Roumanians of the Kingdom, what will happen ? Do you believe that we shall remain even as we are ? If Germany is victorious, two peoples, the Germans and the Hungarians will emerge more powerful from this war, and justly so, not indeed in moral greatness

but in material greatness, and there is enough meanness in this world for people always to be found who will applaud the triumph of material greatness. (*Prolonged applause from the Opposition.*)

Do you imagine that Hungary would still tolerate the continuation of an independent State here ? No, gentlemen, it is the Zollverein that awaits us for a beginning, to end in the Hapsburg Confederation.

I can understand that, at times of profound discouragement, when Roumanians have asked themselves what could be done to secure our general re-union, there have been found spirits of such infirm temper as to have dreamt of a union in slavery under the Hapsburgs.

Of that I have never dreamt. I have always regarded it as a nightmare. I have never contributed to the *Gross Oesterreich.* And even if I had contributed, I should have done so only in order to pave the way that led to a *Grösser Rumänien.* (*Prolonged applause.*)

Our ideal, after eighteen centuries of existence, after centuries of suffering—is it only, then, to pass from Turkish to Hungarian vassalage ? God protect us from the domination of the Austrian bureaucracy !

Look at the Bukovina and ask yourselves

what would become of us under that domination! (*Applause.*)

But, gentlemen—and with this I close for to-day—the policy which is now proposed to us has one defect that throws all the others into the shade.

Gentlemen, you know the story of the doctor who had invented a method of teaching his horses to do without eating: he gave them every day a little less provender——

M. A. C. Couza.—He must have been a Jew.

M. Take Jonesco.—And when he had reached the point at which the daily feed was reduced to nothing at all, the horses died.

Your policy has the defect of being impossible.

This policy may at the utmost call forth a few speeches, bring into being a few respectable papers and many gutter prints, and corrupt a few consciences—but it can never be realised. (*Applause.*)

I affirm with the greatest confidence that there exists no politician, no party, no Parliament, no one whatsoever, who can lead Roumania into the path along which M. Carp and M. Stere want to drag her. (*Prolonged applause.*)

[*The sitting was suspended at* 6.20. *M. Take Jonesco continued his speech at the sitting of the following day, Thursday,* 17*th December,* 1915.]

HESITATIONS AND FLUCTUATIONS.

M. Take Jonesco.—Gentlemen, I showed yesterday, so far as my powers went, what is the situation of Roumania in the European War, and what is the only policy she can follow in accordance with the national instinct—a policy destined to lead us to the realisation of our national ideal.

It is evident, however, that at the beginning of the world-war there were certain hesitations; some weeks had passed before definite ideas and a firm decision had worked themselves out in the minds of most of us.

If the instinct of the nation is as strong as I maintain it to be, it is incumbent on me to explain to what were due the hesitations, the fluctuations of the first days which succeeded the conflagration.

Gentlemen, they were due in the first place to surprise. For long the world had been familiar with the idea that a war was possible; but people always hoped that this calamity would not happen within their lifetime. Men hoped in defiance of the evidence.

Before accepting the idea that such a massacre could be a necessity of our time, the hopes of all the world clung now to the momentary dis-

position of one sovereign, now to the wisdom of others, now to the action of the extremist parties, which might be expected to form an obstacle. That was the state of mind everywhere, and of course among us as well.

On the day of the crime of Serajevo, all the world shuddered. Everyone who knew how great had been the irritability of Austria-Hungary during the whole year 1912–13 ; everyone who knew what trouble it had cost the German Emperor to hold it in check, at the time when he had uttered the characteristic saying, " You are making too much noise at Vienna with my sabre"; everyone who had been at all behind the scenes in politics, and knew how often peace had been on the point of being disturbed by the nervous, almost morbid, action of the Cabinet of Vienna, was much disquieted by the crime of Serajevo. Everyone asked himself: what capital will the mischief-makers try to extract out of this event ?

But, gentlemen, this apprehension did not amount to a prevision of the outbreak of war, even among the most initiated. Without committing an indiscretion, I may say that the late King, at the time of my departure for abroad, in the summer, was so persuaded that

peace would be maintained that he said to me: "This year you will have quiet holidays. You will be able to enjoy three whole months." And when I answered him, "Yes, but no one knows yet what Austria will do," King Carol assured me that the peace of the world was secure for four or five years to come.

It was the same abroad. I remember that on the Wednesday before the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia was delivered, the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs said to me that he was uneasy, and that he could not believe that anyone would be mad enough to provoke a European War, which he described as "the bankruptcy of civilisation," a cataclysm of which no one yet born could foresee all the consequences.

It is very natural, gentlemen, that this surprise at events known to be possible, but which men hoped they would never see, should, for a certain time, have disturbed all consciences. It especially disturbed, up to the day of the declaration of war, our consciences—the consciences of those few Roumanians who knew our international obligations.

The great anxiety, which almost paralysed our power of judgment and our vitality, was

the fear that the makers of the war would have the adroitness to preserve their pacific mask to the last, and force the parties attacked to be the ones actually to declare war—for in that case we should have been bound by the letter of the treaty. Gentlemen, it is no secret for anyone that, if war had broken out in such a way that the treaty bound us to take part in it, our age-old loyalty, without any doubt, would have determined us to march against our national interests. We should have honoured our signature, for we Roumanians know nothing of the theory of scraps of paper that can be thrown into the waste-basket. (*Applause from the Minority.*)

The second difficulty, the second trouble, arose from the very horror. of the cataclysm. Thus, for instance, I declare to you that, at Vienna, on the Thursday of the week of the Passion—the Passion of humanity, war having been declared two days before—it was still confidently believed that England would not depart from her neutrality; it was confidently believed that Italy would come in on the Austrian side; people were sure of Bulgaria, of Turkey, and of Japan; there was a certain doubt only as to Sweden and ourselves.

This is a good mark that I give to the Government, this fact that on Holy Thursday there

were still doubts in Vienna as to our attitude. I shall come presently to the bad marks to be assigned to the Government. I begin with the good ones—there were still doubts.

Gentlemen, there was yet another thing that could not but trouble us. We all knew of the formidable military preparations of Germany; we knew of the lack of preparation among the Allies. We all knew that the war was the work of a trio of whom Tisza was the chief, Forgach the active agent, and the third was the German Ambassador, Tschirsky. We knew, too, that the note to Serbia had been intentionally drawn up in such terms that it could not be accepted, and that what Vienna most dreaded was that Serbia might nevertheless accept it, which would deprive them of the opportunity of giving Serbia a lesson, if Russia dared not—and to the very last they did not believe that Russia would dare—to set the world on fire, and if Russia had the courage to refuse to accept the humiliation without war, of gaining hegemony by that path.

THE TREATY WITH THE CENTRAL POWERS.

There was, however, gentlemen, one thing that caused us to heave a sigh of relief. When

the war began under such conditions that neither the letter nor the spirit of the treaty placed us under any further obligation; when we had the good fortune to find that Italy, whose treaty was identical with ours, imposed the acceptance of her own interpretation, namely that the treaty did not engage us—it was then, gentlemen, that, for the first time, we felt a sensation of relief. A weight was lifted from our hearts. Whatever course the cataclysm might take, one thing was certain: we had escaped the ignominy of contributing with our blood to a victory which would have been our own destruction. (*Applause.*)

On the eve of the Council of the Crown, in the course of a conversation with one of the most important politicians of our country, with whom, naturally, I was reviewing all possible hypotheses, at that moment I made to him a declaration which, I am sure, will be revealed when the proper time comes; I said to him: "It is my duty under all circumstances to support the action of my country; but there is one position to which I shall never reconcile myself; there is one thing which I, for my part, will never do, whatever may be the issue of the war, whatever may be the strength of the Central Powers or the weakness of the Allies, I will

never give my consent, I will never give my concurrence, to our intervention on the side of Austria-Hungary in a world-war brought about as it has been in the year 1914."

But, gentlemen, there was yet another thing that at that time weighed upon our minds: though the *casus fœderis* foreseen in the treaty of alliance had not arisen in such a way that the draft could be presented for payment, you may easily suppose that it was still a burden to our State. One cannot be for 31 years the ally of a Power, and then, at a moment's notice, draw the sword against her. There are moral impossibilities. Ah, the great States, no doubt, can afford themselves all the luxuries, among others that of immorality; but the small nations, who have made themselves by their own efforts, who have to live by the respect paid to their honour, cannot allow themselves such indulgences. We felt all the weight of this treaty also, which I shall examine presently, which did not die politically until the day of the Council of the Crown, which did not cease to exist juridically until the day on which Italy declared war against Austria. Politically, the treaty died on the day of the Council of the Crown, for it was then that it appeared clearly that a defensive alliance to safeguard European

peace could not be transformed by certain allies, however great they might be, into an offensive alliance to break the peace and to satisfy lusts of conquest. Finally, for a casuist in international law, the entry of Italy into the war removed the last possibility of a sophistical interpretation of our alliance. Having entered into an alliance with three parties, what am I to do when two of them fall out ? No one can pretend that I am more the ally of the one than of the other. So much we have at any rate gained, that we have escaped from all bonds, and have become completely masters of our own actions. (*Applause.*)

And now, gentlemen, I think it would only be right—after having established that our alliance of 31 years has ceased to exist politically and juridically, after having established, what we all feel, that it has weighed heavily upon us during these seventeen months—it would only be right not to let this political corpse of ours go to its eternal repose without placing its origin in a clear light, without showing its necessity at the time of its conception, without stating the advantages we have derived from it and the evils we have suffered on account of it.

ORIGIN OF THE TREATY.

Roumania, gentlemen, could not engage in foreign politics, in the European sense of the term, before the establishment of her independence and her internal consolidation. At one time Roumania wanted—I find proof of the fact in a speech of Stolojan's in 1883, to which I shall return anon—she once wanted, he says, to enter into external politics, always in the direction of which I spoke yesterday, that is to say, always with a view to crossing the Carpathians.

And at that time the opportunity was lost.

Here, gentlemen, is what Stolojan said, in 1883, of the time of the Italian War: "The policy of Napoleon III. with regard to us was directed to two ends: one, which he avowed, namely, to raise a barrier against Russia; the other, which he as yet kept secret, namely, to create on the flank of Austria a State which should come to his aid in the struggle for which he was preparing against the Hapsburg States. It would be useless to enter into details as to the propositions which were made to us, to tell you of the mistakes which we committed, the indiscretions which lost us the confidence of the great Emperor. Let it suffice for me to say that we did not enter into his views. It

remains for those who, at that time, had influence and could make themselves heard, to justify themselves in the eyes of the country for not having profited by these moments."

After this incident, gentlemen, we had no foreign policy, in the true sense of the word, before the war.* After the war, we found ourselves at last an independent State, elevated into the dignity of a kingdom, with our military prestige henceforward re-established, and, what was more important, having acquired on the field of battle the confidence in our own strength, which is perhaps the most powerful weapon a nation can possess for the accomplishment of its mission. And then, gentlemen, inevitably, there began to ferment afresh in the public mind the age-old idea, never extinct, of the passage of the Carpathians.

People began to believe that Michael the Brave, a legendary hero in virtue of his crossing of the Carpathians, would come to life again, thanks to the glory acquired at Plevna, thanks to the battles beyond the Danube. Thence arose, gentlemen, the movement in the kingdom, a movement which fomented no conspiracy, which had not in view any embarrassing "irredenta," but a movement of awakening of souls,

* *i.e.* the Russo-Turkesi War of 1878-9.

of confidence in our own strength, of livelier hopes for our future. It was at that moment that Austria chose to call us to order. You have heard the avowal of M. Carp himself that, in 1881, Austria wanted to place us under her protectorate. The truth is this : Austria, which had opposed the union of the Principalities, as, besides, Russia too had opposed it in 1866, wanted to break us. (*Interruptions.*) You know the circular of the Russian Foreign Office in 1866, demanding that the Assemblies of Moldavia and Wallachia should again vote separately on the subject of the union, under the pretext that it had been a personal vote for Couza. I have made up my mind, gentlemen, to tell the whole truth, without any consideration for the politics of to-day, for I believe that a true alliance between peoples cannot be founded upon a voluntary blindness, but, on the contrary, upon the fullest light, upon the satisfaction of the common interests of to-day, in the hope of harmony concerning the interests of to-morrow as well.

THE QUESTION OF THE DANUBE.

Well, gentlemen, with what would you have had Austria strangle us ? She invented the question of the Danube, and she chose an

absolutely favourable moment. There was no one in Europe who could hinder her. Russia? Russia gave her consent, because she too was interested in an affair on the Lower Danube, and, besides, Russia in 1881 was not in a position to maintain very cordial relations with us. You will tell me that it was her own fault. It is not against the man who has done you wrong that you feel the greatest resentment, but against the man to whom you have done wrong—just as the greatest love is reserved, not for your benefactors, but for those to whom you have been a benefactor. These are psychological truths which no one can dispute. (*Applause.*)

Germany? Germany had just formed an alliance, in 1879, with Austria. Italy? Italy, gentlemen, was about to enter, a year later, in 1882, into the Triple Alliance. France? France at that moment had lost much of her importance as a factor in international affairs, having too recently emerged from her tragedy of 1870. And besides, in France, Gambetta cherished the illusion of an alliance with Austria, with a view to *la revanche*, founding his hopes upon the sayings of some *Schwarz-gelb* of the Vienna *Burg*, who whispered discreetly into the ears of credulous diplomats, into the ears of those who did not

see the impossibility of France seeking support for *la revanche* in the Austrian corpse. England? England was very intimate with Germany. It was under these conditions, gentlemen, that Austria undertook to raise the question of the Danube. I had just returned from abroad, and I remember the agitation which the question aroused in the country. Every one understood that it was not so much the Danube that mattered, that a much graver question was really at stake, the question whether we were to lose our independence.

M. Carp told you that, on the question of the Danube, Germany alone took our part. Permit me to tell him that he is mistaken. Here are the facts. When the Conference of London met, the first question raised was: Should Roumania be admitted? And on that point I read: "England, and up to a certain point Italy, were of opinion that Roumania should be admitted. But the German Ambassador opposed the proposition, 'because,' said his Excellency, 'if one gave her the right to vote, one would create for her an undesirable position —that of being able to oppose her veto at will.'" I quote from M. Nenitzesco.

Ah, gentlemen, after the treaty had been concluded without us, when Count Karolyi,

the plenipotentiary of Austria, demanded that the stipulations of the Conference should be declared enforceable, it was not till then that Count Münster, the representative of Germany, opposed the demand, declaring that no measure of compulsion could be taken to secure the execution of the decisions of the Conference of London.

M. Zamfir Filotti.—In the meantime, the protest made in our name by Stourdza had been received, declaring that we would not accept the Conference of London.

M. Take Jonesco.—Naturally; but there were two ways of making our opinion prevail. One was that we should be admitted to the Conference, where our vote would have blocked the proposal. The other was that, after the conclusion of the treaty without us, it should not be imposed on us. Roumania was abandoned by Germany on the first point, when England and Italy were in our favour. On the second point, Germany helped us.

But at what price? The price, gentlemen, was our treaty of alliance with Austria. In fact, gentlemen, after the conclusion at London of the treaty on the Danube, which gave to Austria, as M. Carp very rightly said, a protectorate over Roumania. . . .

M. P. P. Carp.—I said "over the Danube."

M. Take Jonesco.—You said "over Roumania." Do you withdraw your words? Very well; but it is certain that the political consequences would react upon Roumania.

M. P. P. Carp.—Evidently.

AN INTOLERABLE SITUATION.

M. Take Jonesco.—After that, gentlemen, as Roumania still objected, a new incident fell all of a sudden from the skies, which Austria seized upon. On the 5th of June, 1883, at the unveiling of the statue of Stephen the Great at Jassy, M. Pierre Gradishteano, who was at that time senator or deputy, I forget which, spoke at the banquet of the two pearls which were missing from the crown of Stephen the Great.

Of these pearls, gentlemen, one, the larger, was beyond the Pruth, was Bessarabia; the other, the smaller, was the Bukovina.

No protest came from Russia, for Russia did not think that her military power would dissolve in a glass of champagne, so that she could no longer defend her frontier.

But from beyond the mountains, where the desire was to pick a quarrel with us at any cost,

and at any cost, as in the case of Serbia, to put an end to Roumanian arrogance, bred of the victories on the plains of Bulgaria, and regarded as menacing to Hungary—from beyond the mountains came formidable protests. Our excuses, the explanations which followed, availed us nothing. The situation had become intolerable.

The word "intolerable" I borrow from one of the authors of the Alliance, from a man who was under no illusion as to what he had done. He said to me that it was the only way of saving an intolerable situation—I repeat, intolerable.

And then, gentlemen, Jean Bratiano went on leave for 40 days, on the 12th of July; King Carol left on the 4th of August. He met Jean Bratiano on August 6th at Breslau. On August 10th, Bratiano returned home. From Berlin the King went to Vienna, and stayed at the Burg. He returned to Prédéal on the 16th of August. Lastly, on August 23rd, Bratiano set off again, for 15 days, to Gastein. It was then that the alliance was concluded.

Would you like to know the reason for these journeys? This is what Jean Bratiano said in his speech of October 29th, 1883: "You have seen what difficulties have been caused for us by the mistranslation of a single word, *sub*

cuvant (from the motive), which was rendered in French by the expression *sous prétexte;* you have seen that, in face of the statue of Stephen the Great, who was the oldest friend of Austria." . . .

Friend of Austria? Bratiano required to hit upon something to get himself out of his embarrassment, so he introduced a little anachronism. M. Iorga will check me if I am wrong.

" A few words have been spoken at a banquet, and because this banquet was semi-official, what difficulties have these words, spoken in a moment of patriotic enthusiasm, created for us! "

One can see clearly from this quotation what pressure Austria brought to bear upon us, and why we could find no other way out but the alliance.

And further on :—

" At that time Prince Bismarck said to me: ' It is your own fault, since neither you Ministers nor your King any longer travel in Europe, so that our only information about you comes from those who want to blacken you.' "

We were suspected—we were accused of wanting to provoke Austria.

"After that, four or five days passed, and our King was invited to go to Berlin to the baptism of a nephew of the German Emperor.

"I intimated then to my colleague at the Foreign Office that I was doing all in my power to secure that the King should accept this invitation, so that it might be seen that neither the King, nor the country, nor we, the Ministers, had lost our instinct of self preservation to such a point that we wanted war."

You see, gentlemen, that in 1883 we were accused of planning war with Austria—the same accusation that was brought against Serbia in 1914, when she was accused of planning war against Austria.

And Bratiano continued :—

"But you ask me what I went there to get. I went, gentlemen, to meet the King at Breslau—Prince Bismarck and Count Kalmucki wished to see me; they wished to assure themselves whether there were any reservations on the part of anyone, whoever it might be, or not."

After this Bratiano gives a series of explanations, and he concludes by these words: "I have taken as my maxim the words that Prince Bismarck twice repeated to me, and I say: 'We are for peace, and whoever provokes war,

or wishes to make an invasion, will have us for his enemy.' "

Prophetic words. Then they served to justify the alliance with Austria. Once more we can to-day apply them literally; once more we are to-day the enemy of those who have provoked war. (*Applause.*)

I have shown you the origin of the Alliance of 1883, of that Alliance which has lasted for 31 years, which has been of service to us, I am going to show it, which has also done us harm, which I shall also show.

The conclusion of this Alliance came, not so much from our fear of Russia, as from the fact that our other neighbour made our life intolerable, and that we found no other means except the Alliance to make our existence tolerable.

In exchange the Protocol about the Danube was naturally given up, for no one wishes to throttle an ally; that would be superfluous; one keeps that for neutrals or one's enemies.

I said, gentlemen, that our Alliance was a forced alliance. That is why, some years ago, when two Ministers of Foreign Affairs, one retired, the other in office, asked me at Paris how it was possible that we could be allies of Hungary, we who could never become a great

country except at the expense of Hungary, I answered—" And the alliance of Italy with Austria, do you understand that ? " And when they said to me, " Certainly, it is an alliance of fear," I replied—" Why do you think that Italy alone is afraid ? "

And then these gentlemen answered :—" You are right, but we ask for one thing only, that is to say, that the day when you are forced to choose, the circumstances may be such that you have freedom of choice and also that you may be strong enough to be able to put your choice into execution." (*Prolonged applause.*)

THE ADVANTAGES OF THE ALLIANCE.

And now, gentlemen, is it the case that this Alliance has not been of any use to us ? Yes, certainly it has ; it has procured us money. M. Carp said—" Do not forget that it is Germany which gave us the money necessary for our development ; there was difficulty in getting France to give us any."

Ah, M. Carp, if I now were in power, and if I were to ask for money from Austria, would not that be madness ? Was it possible that, when we were in an alliance which at a given moment could place us in a camp opposed to that of France, we should expect that France

would give us money ? I, for my part, regard the few hundreds of millions of Roumanian stock taken by France as a miracle, for the natural thing would have been that all our loans should be placed with those who were to profit by our military and economic development.

Gentlemen, the Alliance has given us tranquility. This is no small matter. For a certain number of years we have lived in peace, and we have been able to develop. We must recognise this to the credit of those who concluded the Alliance, although against their will.

Something else the Alliance gave us, to which my friend Filipesco lately drew my attention. The persecution of the Roumanians beyond the mountains was at times alleviated just because of the Alliance. Whatever one may say, it is not possible to tread under foot, to strangle the Roumanian population with the same severity, when Roumania is an ally, as it was when she was in a hostile group.

Something else, again, the Alliance gave us, a plaything for our sentiments during recent years—certain projects which were made at Buda-Pest for concessions to the Roumanians in Hungary, projects which, gentlemen, were a true thermometer. Whenever Hungary feared a general war the concessions increased ; when-

ever the fear of a general war diminished, even those concessions which had already been granted were revoked. In truth, no one has ever been able seriously to consider, or could ever consider, concessions of this kind as a solution of the problem. There can be no concession when a question is at stake in which the life of one side excludes the life of the other. There are temporary *modi vivendi*; there are those conditions of inferiority to which one can resign oneself when it is not possible to attain the superior condition of national unity. (*Prolonged applause.*)

ILLUSIONS.

At first, gentlemen, the Alliance had also given us illusions.

This was necessary. It was difficult to say to a people who for centuries had lived in the hope of passing the Carpathians that their dream was closed for ever, and not open to it some other prospect. How strange appears to-day the speech of Stolojan, in which he laid down his programme on his motion of October, 1883, a motion which he had arranged with Jean Bratiano in order to give the latter an opportunity for making the declaration which I read out to you just now.

In Stolojan's speech, which Bratiano described as "well-informed, patriotic and clever," we were offered nothing less than the whole Balkan Peninsula and Constantinople. But in the same motion an unpardonable fault was also committed. For the first time we were represented as supporters of polyglot states; we were told that our ideal, the state of a single race and a single tongue, was too narrow.

Gentlemen, I am going to quote you certain portions from this debate. Now that we are making up the final balance of the past, a past which is finished for ever, and which no one will ever be able to revive, it is well to recognise both our profits and our losses, and also the illusions with which we were nourished in former days.

"Gentlemen," said Stolojan, "our civilisation has, for the greater part, come to us from Transylvania, and our national ideal shows the result of this. In my opinion it is too one-sided, and this is the reason why I make this digression. We must enlarge our conception; we must elevate our ideal."

After this statement, Stolojan passes to the Balkan Peninsula, and says: "The existence of the Ottoman Empire has now come to an end. It is only by a miracle that it continues

its life over which judgment has been pronounced; everyone sees its end—the real interest of the whole world is to know who will replace the Turks. That is the reason why everyone offers his services that the East may not remain without a master."

After this, the speaker shows that the Hungarians pose as inheritors of Turkey. He examines their claims and he proves that ours would be more legitimate. Listen:—

"Gentlemen, I have told you that I do not ask you to examine whether such aspirations on the part of the Magyars are possible; I am content to ask you:—Are we, the Roumanians, we who by ourselves are more numerous than all the nationalities of the East, are we not to think of the rôle which we are called to fill in the East, since we have numbers on our side? The East is sown with our colonies. The Serbs and Bulgarians hate one another. South of Widdin, in Bulgaria, in Eastern Serbia, is a dense population, consisting solely of Roumanians who separate the Serbs from the Bulgarians. In Macedonia, in Thessaly, in Epirus the Roumanians in numerous compact colonies separate the Greeks from the Bulgarians, the Albanians from the Greeks; with the Roumanian language one can travel throughout

the whole of the Peninsula. Tradition, historical memories are for us. Formerly we formed a political state with the Bulgarians; the Serbs are glad to recognise that it is the Roumanians alone with whom throughout their whole history they have never been at war; the Albanians, so hostile to the Greeks, live in perfect harmony with the Roumanians."

And that the matter might be still clearer he added:

"We ask no one to repudiate his nationality, for we have written on our flag 'Popular Government'; with us, as with the peoples of the East, there is no aristocracy; on our flag is inscribed not only religious toleration, but also national toleration. Our ideal, we proclaim it aloud, is Switzerland, is Belgium, a political state which equally protects all nationalities; in a word, we have proved that we can govern foreign races to their satisfaction."

This new ideal, which is put forward as enlarging our aspirations, in truth was a repudiation of the very foundation of our existence. Our existence is based, not on a dynasty which has gathered round it different provinces, nor on a geographical necessity; our existence has no other basis than national sovereignty, the result of our national unity,

of our ethnical homogeneity, of our moral unity. (*Prolonged applause.*)

I have turned to the past, gentlemen, in order to show you that, even when under the pressure of necessity, to escape an ultimatum à la Serbia, we entered into the alliance, even then there was opened to us the prospect of other aspirations, while now, now that Bulgaria has tied herself to the triumphant chariot of the Magyars, now that Buda-Pest and Sofia have become one, we are asked to follow the same policy, but the Carpathians and the Danube are closed to us, we are deprived even of the crumbs of those illusions of the polyglot State which we were to govern with justice for the good of all the nationalities, a Belgian ideal, or a Swiss ideal. (*Applause.*)

TWO "IRREDENTE."

But, anyhow, gentlemen, did they keep their word? Only a few years after the Treaty of Alliance was signed Bulgaria wished to make a personal union with us. When we are able to search in the archives it will be seen that Austria opposed this personal union; it is certain that Austria opposed it.

Later there came a moment when Serbia wished to make a personal union with us. I

cannot to-day say all I know about this, for I had to be one of the actors in this matter. We refused, and we could not but refuse. The thing was impossible. We knew well that our ally would never have tolerated the personal union of the two *irredente*, the Serbian *irredenta* and the Roumanian *irredenta*.

All the illusions have vanished, all. During the years 1912 and 1913, in our painful trials, it is certain that, apart from the official support which was given us so far as words went, we felt all the time that difficulties were being put in our way, Vienna said, and rightly from her point of view: a Roumania if too strong, like a Serbia if too strong, is a danger to us. Bulgaria alone has no *irredenta* in Austria, a powerful Bulgaria is in our interest.

Gentlemen, my policy, my small influence in the Balkan policy of Roumania in 1912 and 1913, this policy which has brought on me so many annoyances, like this philo-Bulgarianism with which I have been so much reproached, had its origin in a single object: I did not wish for any action or any combination which would put us in hostility with all the Christians beyond the Danube—then when they were still allies—and which would inevitably have drawn us to ask for the support of the

Hungarians, and to put in action the Alliance by which we were bound to them.

My whole object, the clue of my conduct, was to avoid all which might have brought us to comradeship in arms with Austria-Hungary.

Gentlemen, I preferred to endure much, and suffer much, rather than expose ourselves to the misfortune of bringing about a general war—a general war in which we should have found ourselves on the side of Austria against the peoples beyond the Danube, against the Serbians, the Bulgarians and the Greeks, and against the Triple Entente.

If we did afterwards pass the Danube—I do not know if all those who did it knew why they did it—I, at least, know that we did not pass the Danube till we were certain that our action could not provoke general war, and that even if it might produce bad blood in some of our Allies, it was convenient to the other group of Powers, to that group which we hoped to join some day, however distant the day might be, in order to realise our national unity. (*Prolonged applause from the Minority.*)

Gentlemen, there are things which cannot be changed by any diplomatic combination; M.

Daneff still knows that in the conversation which I had with him on the day of the opening of Parliament during the autumn of 1912, I said to him: "We are forced to maintain good relations. You need us because we separate you from the great empires, and we need you because we do not wish to be caught between the shears—unfortunately we are caught to-day—for, if we have your permanent enmity, we can only have permanent enmity on the other side of the Carpathians. Indeed, even if we had the cowardice to renounce our ideal, the Magyars would never believe in the sincerity of our cowardice, and we should always have their hostility, whatever we might say, whatever we might do." (*Prolonged applause from the Minority.*)

The instinct of the nation was so powerful that when we, the Government, mobilised to enter Bulgaria, the people interpreted our mobilisation by the placards which they carried in the street, and on which were written, "Down with Austria!"

When we sent our soldiers across the Danube, they, in their barracks, said that the passage of the Danube was the road to Transylvania. The road to Transylvania through Bulgaria! Experience proves to us that their instinct

was wiser than our judgment. (*Prolonged applause.*)

The necessity of escaping from the shears in which fate has placed us can no longer be satisfied by diplomatic combinations, but only by such increase of our strength, by such recuperation of our energies that we may be able to struggle to right and to left to defend our secular rights. (*Prolonged applause.*)

THE ALLIANCE HAS LASTED TOO LONG.

Gentlemen, the Alliance of 1883 has caused us other disappointments. Serious accusations are brought, and brought with justice, not only against the present Government, but against all the Governments, on the grounds that circumstances have not found us sufficiently prepared. It is not a question of moral preparation, as M. Stere suggested. No, morally we are always prepared for national action; let it be known that action has been determined on, and you would see how within 24 hours all those who to-day declare that they are hostile to it, would disappear beneath the earth. (*Prolonged and continued applause. "Bravo!"*)

But material preparation? Yes, gentlemen, our material preparation leaves much to be desired. Our material preparation has been

sacrificed to the old Alliance of 31 years. We ceased to think of any other hypotheses. The composition of our artillery, our system of fortifications, the failure to create factories of arms and munitions, the failure to provide the essentials of supplies, the whole of our organisation, all was based on the single hypothesis that our western frontier would be open; that by this western frontier we should be able to get at the time all that we might want. That, certainly, has weighed upon us in present circumstances. In this, it cannot be doubted, is one of the worst consequences of the Alliance of 31 years.

Our fault did not consist in having concluded the Alliance in 1883, but in lingering too long in this Alliance and above all in not having used it with a certain liberty. Nothing is stronger than inertia.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES.

This is the condition in which the war found us. That which happened at the moment of the declaration of war did not depend upon us. That which happened in the first days after the declaration of war did not depend upon us. But that which happened a month later did depend upon us.

Well, gentlemen, did we do all that we ought to have done ? Have the accusations as to the moments that we allowed to pass by any foundation ? Or have we simply to do with an exaggeration on our side ?

The fact that during the last year no one among us has spoken out, is it not characteristic ? Why did we not speak during the past year ? Why do we speak now ? Is it because we wish to make speeches ? But who among us is there who does not know that even if he succeeded in putting into words all he thought, still his speech would be below the level of the events with which he deals ?

Would it be because we wished to fix the responsibility ?

But what should we do with these responsibilities ? Who among us is so small as to imagine that when the destiny of a people is at stake we could be interested in the responsibility of a man, of a Government, of a party, or of a Parliament ? (*Prolonged and repeated applause. "Bravo!"*)

M. A. C. Couza.—This theory also is dangerous.

M. Take Jonesco.—No, gentlemen, it is not the question of responsibility which urges us on. If I, in my turn, wish, as other members

of the Opposition have done, to establish certain points, certain mistakes, it is only in order that in future mistakes may be avoided. For, gentlemen, in ordinary life the consequences of mistakes are simple ; the Government is changed and there's an end of it! In events like those of to-day, it would be no good to change Governments, the sins which had been committed would not be rectified. In ordinary life consequences are simple. Certain men fall ; certain parties are weakened. But, to-day, what does the maintenance or the fall of men or parties profit us? (*Prolonged applause.*)

Who is there among us so filled with vanity as to imagine that his person, his life, his career, the career and future of his friends, can weigh in the balance with which the destiny of a nation is measured? (*Prolonged and repeated applause. "Bravo!"*) Is there anyone among us who would not with joy sacrifice his past, his present, and his future, who would not willingly be buried in eternal obscurity, so that even his very name should be forgotten, for the sake of the moment which should produce the hero who would give us a great Roumania. (*Long and repeated applause. "Bravo!"*)

FAVOURABLE MOMENTS.

But, gentlemen, confidence without reason and silence without motive would be a sin both against the country which we represent, against you who direct her forces, and against the generations which have preceded us, and against those who will follow after us. In all sincerity—though I wish with all my heart I may be mistaken—in all sincerity we believe that you have made mistakes, that you have let great opportunities pass, and we doubt very much if such opportunities will come again. These opportunities were discussed. Lemberg was mentioned. Others answered. What was their answer? Strategy? I do not concern myself with military strategy, I am concerned with political strategy. Certain it is that after Lemberg, Austria lost her head.

Certain it is that, at that moment, she was in real terror that we should come into the war; certain it is that at that moment we could have done wonders, but, in justice, I must say that there were certain difficulties which would have hampered any Roumanian Government.

I must not to-day, when we alone speak and the others do not answer—and therefore in what we say we must neither lay traps nor in any way

sin by injustice—I must not to-day recall the greatness of the lost opportunity without at the same time remembering the difficulties, those difficulties which could not be put on one side, without making decisions which to me seemed easy to make, but which to others appeared too difficult.

And I cannot conscientiously state that the possibility of putting these difficulties on one side was nearer to the truth of facts than what appeared to others to be the impossibility.

Then, gentlemen, another moment came, a moment which all the country was waiting for, and when the difficulties I have just referred to, the difficulties of the Lemberg days, had ceased to exist; my conviction is that those difficulties could not have reappeared; and then—it is merely a question of conviction—at that moment, gentlemen, at the moment of Italy's entry, our entry into the war was clearly indicated, and this step would probably have influenced the political situation in Bulgaria in spite of the obstinacy of King Ferdinand.

I know the extenuating circumstances which are alleged, but in spite of everything, I thought then, and I think to-day, that we ought to have profited by this moment, even if we had to make certain sacrifices. I expressed myself at the

time in these terms. It will only be if experience proves that those sacrifices have been finally avoided, it will only be if experience proves that we have gained all that we might have gained at that moment, only then will I say *mea culpa*. I will say it with all my heart, for there is no one who would sooner have been mistaken, and have to ask pardon, rather than be proved to have been right in maintaining that the country has lost a great opportunity. (*Prolonged applause.*)

Then, gentlemen, came the third moment, the moment when Bulgaria threw aside the mask she had worn for so long, when she adopted a course of action explicable perhaps by the morality of the counting-house, but which can never be forgiven.

At that moment we were under the obligation to defend Serbia. This I know, for I am one of those who wrote and signed that undertaking. But it was more than an obligation, for what is an obligation at a time when treaties count for nothing ? It was to our interest to defend Serbia.

I know well, gentlemen, all that can be argued, when it is a question of proving what would have happened, if such and such a thing had not existed. All the same, it is difficult

to say to-day whether, if Roumania had mobilised at the same time as Bulgaria, in Greece that great man might not have stayed in power, who was evidently so much greater than his country, which is just as serious a misfortune as that the leader of a people should be less great than the people. (*Applause.*) One cannot deny that this possibility existed, I am even convinced that it was a probability. And I do not believe that we here did everything that we might have done to bring about this possibility. I hope I may be mistaken, but I fear that I am not.

Gentlemen, I see all that we have lost by our inaction, at that moment when we might have stopped the crushing of the Serbian army, and the descent of the Germans towards the south, at that moment when we knew that the Allies would come, as they have come, at that moment when we were powerful enough to hold back the enemy even till this day—there is amongst the members of the House a General who has always adhered to this conviction, and he is not alone in his opinion—I see that we have suffered a loss worse than the notorious material isolation. I fear that we may find ourselves in that moral isolation which to me seems a much graver danger. One is too apt to

forget, gentlemen, that in these days it is no longer the Cabinets but the peoples themselves who control politics.

That hour that we have allowed to pass was the hour in which, while fighting for our own interests, our own ideals, we could at the same time render the greatest service, a service which, however long the war may last, we shall never again be able to render. (*Minority applause.*) And by these means we might have gained rights amongst the peoples who lead Europe, which we may sorely need in the future, for no one can foresee how events may turn, and what dangers may await us. It was in our power to avert from the Quadruple Alliance the moral grief of the abandonment of Serbia. We only could have prevented it, and no one else.

Ten million soldiers in Paris were then worth less than our army here. We alone could have arrived in time ; we alone could have prevented what has happened ; we alone could thus have gained rights in Eastern Europe, a real moral hegemony, while at the same time playing a European part, since we should have been the determining factor in the action of Europe. (*"Bravo!" Prolonged applause from the Opposition.*)

It is not a question of "*panache.*" No one has the right to sacrifice human lives for political mummery, but since we know that we ought in any case to take part in the war—I for my part, at any rate, am convinced of it—I should have preferred that our entry into the war should coincide with the possibility of playing a European part. I would have wished this for little Roumania, which, in these circumstances, thanks to its position, thanks to this unique historical moment which will never return, could, small power though she be, have done the work of a Great Power. ("*Bravos!*" *Prolonged applause.*)

Gentlemen, I am so penetrated by what I say to you that, believe me, I find as it were a note of interrogation in my conscience. I have no doubt as to the conditions of the problem, but I ask myself: Is there not a mystery which you do not know? Not a condition of the problem, I repeat, but a mystery, since my reason, my judgment, my knowledge of the situation, everything, absolutely everything, prevents me from understanding how, why, Roumania did not fulfil her duty at the moment when Bulgaria entered into the war, how Roumania in so inexplicable a manner could renounce both her glory and her safety.

Gentlemen, there is one thing only in M. Stere's

speech which impressed me, and that must have impressed you also. M. Stere said to us: "Let it be so, I admit the crushing of Austria" —for my part it is not a question of admitting it, I am convinced that she will be brought into liquidation; that, like all artificial things, she will not be able to survive a disturbance of this kind—"but," added M. Stere, "there are others beside us who have mortgages on Austria which take precedence of ours; it will be they who will have to be satisfied first; Italy, Russia, Serbia; you who take up your mortgage so late, how can you be sure that you would be able to foreclose? You have lost priority," said M. Stere, "you have failed even in your own policy."

He is right, we have lost priority. I hope with all my soul that we might be able to regain it, for, gentlemen, if I have insisted and if I insist on these mistakes, it is that they may not be repeated.

ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY.

But will there be another opportunity? Often my judgment makes me doubt, but a devouring passion drives away my doubts, for did I not believe that our opportunity would come I could not have found the strength to mount this tribune.

I believe that the hour will strike, but for this hour I demand, in place of a passive attitude which awaits events, an active attitude which prepares for the hour and makes it come. (*Prolonged and repeated applause.*)

When a nation has claims as great as ours, when the satisfaction of these claims is a question of life or death, I find that we are not fulfilling our duty if we wait until the chance comes to us. No, gentlemen, we must *act* to make the hour come in which we can throw all our strength, all our energy, into the scale. (*Prolonged applause.*)

For try to imagine what would be our fate if the great hour were not to return, if we had to remain in our present situation. Have you made the calculation ? It would be life in permanent shame, and the shame would take from it all its value ; it would be to complete our days in the most terrible torture.

Recently a former friend reproached me. Some among us had thought—we were obviously wrong—of our own personal lot. In a Roumania which had done its duty, but which had not succeeded, our duty would have been to persevere to the last gasp and to work with more energy than ever. But in a Roumania which

had dishonoured itself, how should we be able to live? And I thought in a moment of moral weakness that nothing would be left for us but exile. Exile also would have been impossible for us, for tell me in what corner of the globe a Roumanian would be able to walk without keeping his gaze constantly fixed on the earth! (*Applause.*)

And now, gentlemen, let us consider the other hypothesis.

Suppose that our great sacrifices—they will be very great—agreed on at this moment, under circumstances which offer us prospects which we could never have expected, and which will never return, should end by giving us the Roumania of our dreams.

Think not so much of her territorial extent, not so much of the number of her inhabitants; think of the moral greatness of the New Roumania.

All our customary life, all our petty combinations, all our disputes which have exhausted our strength and have tarnished our youth, all those artificial combinations, the last remnants of the oligarchy of a petty principality, how all that would be swept away by the great stream which would put in their place a new life. (*Long and repeated applause.*)

Think of the problem which men separated for a thousand years will have to solve; think of the useful and productive labour which the young will have to accomplish in order to organise the new foundations of the new Roumanian State. I see the gates of paradise opening and a superstitious fear bids me close my eyes; it is too beautiful! (*Long and repeated applause. "Bravos!"*)

The task of writing a living epic has fallen on the shoulders of our generation, though no generation has been less prepared for the heroic life. We are the first Roumanian generation which has inherited without producing.

It is the labour of past generations, their sufferings, their warlike deeds in time of war, their diplomacy in the period of diplomacy, which have set up this tribune. It is to their sacrifices that we owe the right of speaking as we now speak; to this we have contributed nothing. (*Prolonged applause.*)

Our generation, which lived during the too rapid growth of wealth in Roumania, has a taste for comfort which does not urge us to heroism. Is not the factitious life of Bukarest during the 17 last months, during which is unfolded the tragedy of the Roumanians who die under every flag and

suffer everywhere, an insult to the grief of the nation ? (*Prolonged applause.*)

This noise of traffic which is heard even on this tribune where we discourse of the sacred mysteries of our race, does it not show how little this generation is prepared for the part that it ought to play ? (*Prolonged applause.*)

And, notwithstanding all, chance has willed it that it should be this generation which accomplishes our destiny. It will either dig the grave of the labour of centuries or it will create an epoch so beautiful that the vision of it plunges me into humility and blinds me with excess of light. (*Prolonged applause.* "*Bravos !*")